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THE BALKAN TRAGEDY

By David Starr Jordan

I

After the Turkish Janizaries who served as the guard of the Greek Empire in the fifteenth century broke loose and seized Constantinople, they also encountered and subdued the "grim, raw races" of the districts, mostly south of the Danube, known collectively as "The Balkans."

Over the Balkan peoples, as over all others included in the Ottoman Empire, the Turks have ruled by force and fear alone—about four million Turks (all the men actual or potential soldiers) against twenty million or more subject Bulgarians, Serbians, Albanians, Roumanians, Vlacks, Armenians, Mesopotamians, Macedonians, Kurds, Syrians, Egyptians, Moors, Arabs, Jews and Greeks. The conquerors forming chiefly an army of occupation, these subject multitudes have lived continuously under martial law. This at the best is not law at all; in the hands of the Turk it has taken the form of utter neglect alternating with savage slaughter. Extermination of heretics has always been proclaimed as a religious duty of the Moslem, though through inertia and sometimes through humanity he has often fallen far short of his theoretical obligations.

Under such conditions it is evident that any degree of self-government or even of ordinary tolerance would mean the dissolution of the Turkish Empire. For if the people themselves were allowed to rule, they would insist upon the "bearable life" which no race under Turkish control has ever attained. The average high-class Turk to be met with in Constantinople is, to be sure, a soft-spoken, leisurely gentleman, but hard and cold nevertheless under the surface, and quite impervious to the feelings of others. Now, as in Byron's time, he is likely to prove as "mild-mannered a man

as ever scuttled a ship or cut a throat." On the other hand, the typical Turkish peasant is a simple-hearted farmer, said to be a brave soldier and a clean fighter.

Turkish officials insist that recurrent massacres are absolutely necessary if Ottoman rule is to be maintained. Only by violence, they say, can the varying elements be held in check. "To concede absolute equality would be to commit suicide." "In our reconstruction of the Ottoman Empire," declared Riza Bey, "administrative conformity must be absolute; autonomy is treason; it means separation. Our Christian compatriots shall be Ottomanized citizens. We shall be no longer conquerors and slaves but a nation of freemen." To this end, it was found necessary to insist on one language, one religion and one code of laws throughout the Empire, that being the program of the "Committee of Union and Progress" organized by the young Turks. Only terrorization and massacre could bring it about. A familiar proverb in Constantinople asserts: "Old Turk, young Turk—old dog, new collar."

In the light of these things one comes to understand the motive of the several massacres and the animus of the several revolts which have marked the last century of Turkish history. Revolutions successively freed Greece, Serbia, Rumania, Bulgaria and East Rumelia (the latter becoming part of Bulgaria) and later permitted the detachment by Austria of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The war of 1912 further set free Albania and Macedonia with the ill-defined districts of Thessaly and Thrace. Montenegro, a little circle of limestone crags, with arable land only in sinkholes formed by the breaking of the crust over underground streams and caves, had held out against the Turks from the first. Settled by unconquered refugees from Serbia, this little state, very poor and very proud, had, until 1916, kept its land and freedom inviolate through the centuries. Only an attack on the eastern rear could have subdued their rocky fastnesses.

The woes of repressed nationalities spring mainly from wars of conquest. Unrest is usually the result of some past effort to bring about order by force. Old political wrongs

can be remedied in either of two ways, by restitution or by conciliation,—the one looking back to causes, the other forward to effects. The first is not always possible, the second not customary. But one or both are necessary to permanent peace. If ancient wounds cannot be healed, they may perhaps be soothed in new tolerance and justice.

Balkan folk have suffered from every conceivable wrong. Slaves to the Turk, “small change of the Tsar,” objects of intrigue by Austria, Russia and Germany—merciless towards one another, mismanaged and misunderstood by the Great Powers—they and their affairs are today in the most hopeless tangle. The only final way out is through federation, notwithstanding the fact that every tendency toward union is opposed by a multitude of conflicting interests.

Federation, with equality before the law, would settle race problems almost at one stroke, because in removing racial domination, racial subservience would be wholly obliterated. For if all races came to have an equal stake in the common government, questions of nationality, language and religion would cease to be of first importance and would pass into the background, as in Switzerland and the United States. With the inextricable racial tangle in Macedonia and Thrace, no right of nationality, except equal right, can be made to apply.

The tragic history of the Balkans has been conditioned on five main elements: (1) emancipation long drawn out—the various districts which gained their freedom from time to time forming separate centers of population and rapidly developing national rivalries; (2) the placing over most of these states of German or Germanized princes, trained in the poisonous dynastic atmosphere; (3) the infesting of the new courts at all times by the secret agents of three unscrupulous dynasties; (4) the weakening of respect for human life by servitude through long generations, and finally (5) a confusions of tongues. As a matter of fact, the Balkan peoples speak at least seven distinct languages, five of them (Slavic, Rumanian, Greek, Hebrew and Turkish) using different alphabets and having scarcely a linguistic root in common. Furthermore, along the borders, in the courts and marts,

six world-tongues (French, German, English, Russian, Italian and Spanish) also crowd for recognition. Under these conditions, racial identity is confused, a man being known by the language he speaks.

Adding to the general complication, two further elements have had their part in creating dissension. First, there are four state hierarchies, or churches, each a political organization, three of them, at least, according to a prominent Bulgarian, being "unconcerned with either religion or morals." Second, under Turkish control, all ancient boundaries were obliterated and promiscuous migrations resulted in inextricable entanglement, especially along the sea-boards. Moreover, the absence of coherent law, with universal social subservience, reduced all races and all social ranks to a common level—at the bottom,¹ a condition obliterating, for the most part, feudal nobilities, which might otherwise have led in racial self-assertion.

II

During the last twenty years, dynastic rivalries had turned Europe into a vast armed camp. Thanks mainly to the German emperor and his military caste, war was in the air. Meanwhile, however, other nations had carried the torch hither and thither throughout the still exploitable world. War was indeed becoming respectable, for almost every great nation had eventually engaged in it.

It seemed therefore a favorable moment to get rid of the Turk by setting fire to the Balkans. Accordingly in 1912, Hartwig, Russian Minister at Belgrade, "the evil genius of the Balkans," lined up the states in an effort to expel the Turk from Europe, even as France, Italy and Britain had driven him from Africa. Nevertheless, it was not understood among the allies that actual war should be the method of expulsion. A Bulgarian university official assured the writer that the premier, Gueschhof, regarded the league as a "simulacrum" (to use his, Gueschhof's own words) that is, as a

¹ This fact has made for ultimate democracy particularly in Bulgaria and Serbia where hereditary orders of nobility were never revived.

kind of "bluff." Its supposed purpose was to exercise some sort of joint pressure which would move the Turk progressively from Albania and Macedonia. But the alliance once made, King Nicola of Montenegro took it seriously. With his whole army, about 50,000 strong, he came down from the mountains, crossed Lake Scutari and stormed the citadel of Scutari, largest and northernmost town of Albania. By this assault, he set the land in flames,² and opened the first Balkan War, by which the Turks were finally expelled from Albania, Macedonia, Thessaly, and most of Thrace and of the islands of the Aegean. The fall of Adrianople brought the contest practically to a close, and in London, soon after, was held a Conference which, under diplomatic pressure from Europe, ended in the unsatisfactory Treaty of London.

In this treaty, the western boundary of Turkey was fixed by a straight line drawn from Enos on the Aegean north-easterly to Midia on the Black Sea. As to the disposal of the lands won from Turkey, many embarrassments arose, due mainly to the conflicting interests of some of the Great Powers. By a special Serbo-Bulgarian treaty previously made, Bulgaria was to have that part of western Macedonia lying south of the ancient Serbian capital of Uskub, while Serbia was to receive, besides the Novi-Bazar, the greater part of Albania, including Durazzo, her coveted "window to the sea," of which, in default of customs agreements, she was really in sore need. Indeed, Serbia had long been grossly oppressed because of the prohibitive tariffs levied on all imports and exports by the greedy states which surrounded her, a fact affecting notably her special product of pork. Other agreements at this time seem to have been mainly informal. By them, it was understood, that Montenegro was to have Scutari itself, and certain barren crags to the southeast known locally as the "Accursed Mountains,"

²Nicola's motives have been questioned. A statesman in a position to know assured me that the king had been selling stocks short on the Vienna Bourse, and therefore it was to his interest that prices should fall. If so, the royal purpose was accomplished, for it is said that stock-values in Europe fell \$200,000,000 at once under this master-stroke. Moreover, most of them have been falling ever since.

together with the whole of the big lake, on the commerce of which Scutari and the Montenegrin villages of Virpazar and Rjeka mainly depend. Greece was apparently to have Epirus, Thessaly and the Islands of the Aegean, though this arrangement also seems to have been left undefined in the written agreements. The Greek premier, Venizelos (a resolute and resourceful statesman), did not ask in behalf of Greece (it is said) for anything east of the Struma River, as the strip along the sea from Demir-Hissar to Kavala "would have no backbone."

By the Concert of Powers in London which reviewed these adjustments, little heed was given to Balkan agreements.³ Albania was the chief "stone of stumbling and rock of offense." Both Austria and Italy had designs upon it, as well as Serbia and Greece. The town of Avlona, key to the Straits of Otranto, a potential "Gilbraltar" was especially claimed by Italy in order to "convert the Adriatic into an Italian Lake." For this demand there was, of course, no racial excuse, though reason enough in a military way, if the European anarchy of the past were to continue.

In view of the general deadlock concerning Albania, the Concert decided to make a separate kingdom of it, under a German princeling.

A word in regard to Albania. This strange, wild, roadless region is inhabited by an untamed people, broken into primitive clans, ruled by their own traditions, and subject to no common authority. Omitting the Greek-speaking Albanians of Epirus, the others constitute four main groups, known at sight by their headwear. The Arnauti wear a low white fez, the Meredites a high one, the Albaneser a low red fez, the Marisols a high one with a long black tassel. The Albane-

³ As to Greek claims, no decision at all seems to have been made by the Concert of Powers. Several of the islands desired by Greece were also coveted by Italy. Montenegro got a rather worthless extension of territory (largely of barren, "accursed" mountains) but was debarred from the city of Scutari, though the writer was informed in Cettinje of the existence of a special promise to lower the bed of the outlet to Lake Scutari by fifteen feet or so, thus redeeming some thousands of acres of land now submerged in shallow water.

ser are Catholics, the others Moslems. Lately it was estimated on good authority⁴ (no census has been possible) that Albania now has 1,300,000 inhabitants. Of these 1,000,000 are Moslems, 240,000 Orthodox Greeks, mostly in Epirus, and 90,000 Roman Catholics; but regardless of divergencies or agreements, all scorn every edict to compel the use of Turkish and persist in the employment of their own dialects. In view, therefore, of Moslem preponderance in Albania, it was suggested in 1912 to the "Committee of Union and Progress" to commence a series of "necessary" massacres in that district where every one refused to use the "National" tongue. For against Moslems, it was said, such severity would not attract the attention and sympathy of Europe—so annoying and even perilous to the Turks in their work of enforcing discipline. Then if the measures succeeded in Albania, they could be later extended to Macedonia, where "union and progress," through extermination of heretics and malcontents, was greatly needed.

The history of the impossible Kingdom of Albania need not be related here. It will, however, be recalled that this political farce lasted only a few months, the King and his court never having dared to emerge beyond the frog-ponds which bounded the tiny "capital," Durazzo.

Matters having been amicably settled at London, the Balkans themselves were next heard from. Serbia at once gave notice to Bulgaria that, being herself debarred from Durazzo, the agreement between them as to Macedonia no longer held, and that she (Serbia) would therefore take as her rightful share of the territory won the northwestern part of that district (Macedonia). Greece in turn demanded Salonica and its hinterland. Bulgarian feeling now ran high, for the people fancied all Macedonia to be racially theirs. As one of their leaders said to me, they "felt like the woman in the Bible story whose child was about to be divided." In brief, they could endure no thought of a division of Macedonia. Under the circumstances, however, Serbia can hardly be blamed for not thinking herself bound

⁴N. J. Cassavety, *Greek-American Review*, April, 1918.

by a treaty already virtually nullified by the Great Powers. Access to the sea, as we have seen, was almost a vital necessity to her national existence. This could be attained in one of three ways only—(1) access to Durazzo through the Novi-Bazar, as agreed on in a treaty, (2) annexation of Herzegovina with the ports of Gravosa, Ragusa and Cattaro in southern Dalmatia, or (3) the annexation of Monastir with the valley of the Vardar River down to the Gulf of Salonica. Failing to secure the first, as previously promised, she insisted on the third.⁵

Meanwhile, peace being apparently established, some of the Bulgarian regiments had begun to disband of their own accord, and to leave for home, thrusting their officers aside. They had had enough of fighting.⁶ If, therefore, a stand was to be made by Bulgaria against the pretensions of Serbia and Greece, immediate action seemed to be demanded. The almost inevitable crash came within about two weeks, even while Western Europe was congratulating itself on the happy outcome of affairs. So far as Bulgaria was concerned, she was forced to make a move of some sort at once, or else to relinquish without a struggle all the important gains of the war. Moreover, Bulgarian feeling had been much inflated because of glories in the field and the schemes of her ambi-

⁵ A better adjustment than any of the above, because it would serve to bind the nations together, would be to establish a free port on the Gulf of Salonica, with privileges of shipment across the intervening country from Serbia, and from Hungary as well. In time, a canal should be built from Belgrade through Nish and down the Vardar River to the Gulf. The importance of such a waterway, already surveyed the writer understands, has been strongly urged by Serbian economists. In a rational world, it might also be possible to make Gravosa on the Adriatic a free port to be reached from Serbia through Herzegovina. A Balkan customs union would solve these several problems at one stroke. Before the war, the common use of the Danube, under control of the joint Danube Commission, afforded a model of coöperative national action.

⁶ The average Bulgarian is a sturdy, independent person, a bit morose and set in his ways, a freeholder at home and a democrat at heart, with a touch of the American spirit which radiates from Robert College throughout the Near East and most distinctly through Bulgaria. It is a common saying that "Robert College is the very heart of Bulgaria." It speaks volumes for the work of the devoted men who have sustained and maintained this great center of education on the Bosphorus.

tious ruler. To be the Prussia of the Balkans was a very flattering prospect, and Tsar Ferdinand, self-willed and audacious, could not let the opportunity slip.

He proceeded then to do the worst thing possible under the circumstances, which was to make war without warning on both Serbia and Greece. The dispute as to who was primarily responsible has brought many facts to light. To me it seems clear that the blame should fall on Ferdinand. His cabinet knew nothing of his intentions; his General, Savoff, executed the orders. The populace, ill-informed and optimistic, applauded this and every other aggressive action.

The hostile move was of course a criminal blunder. In this connection, intelligent Bulgarians have admitted to the writer that their country has committed at one time or another all the diplomatic errors she has found possible. This particular one (as well as the recent joining of fortunes with Germany) had tragic results, as will be seen.

To begin with, Ferdinand's plan to make surprise attacks on Serbia and Greece found the Serbian army already warned, and in the encounter with them the Bulgarians were badly worsted. The simultaneous descent on the Greeks in Macedonia, however, was at first successful.

Meanwhile, Rumania, under the claim that she had received no part of the Balkan spoils a share of which was due her for remaining neutral, invaded the Dobruja in northern Bulgaria. At this, the Bulgarian soldiers in Macedonia, knowing their own homes to be imperilled and careless of military discipline, hastily abandoned the field and turned to the defense of their own ravaged lands.

Moving northward up the Struma River, they were pursued by the Greeks as far as the borders of old Bulgaria, though they made two or three vigorous stands near Dzumaja on the way. While these events were taking place, Turkey, repudiating the Enos-Midia line drawn as her north-western boundary in Europe, also entered the lists and soon recaptured Adrianople and Kirk-Kilissy. Thus attacked on every side, Bulgaria capitulated and the second Balkan war was brought to an end by the Treaty of Bucharest. "We were compelled to accept whatever terms were offered,"

said a Bulgarian official. "If they had asked us to shoot our King, we should have had to do it."

In accord with this treaty, Rumania⁷ received the southern Dobruja, a stretch of rich meadows on the lower Danube, which includes the city of Silistria. Serbia acquired Ochrida and Monastir with most of northwestern Macedonia. Greece took a broad strip with the seaboard from Thessaly eastward to beyond Kavala.⁸ By these readjustments Bulgarian acquisitions were reduced to the Rhodope mountain region, north of the River Bistritza, and much of Thrace, including the Thracian Coast with the marshy Porto Lago and its shallow bay and the open roadstead of Dedeagatsch.

Thus was completed the humiliation of Bulgaria. In brief, the allies had determined to crush her once for all. By this means was created on her every side a new Alsace-Lorraine, a "wound in flanks" of Balkan unity. But in the events leading up to this consummation, Bulgaria, as we have already seen, had been far from sinless.

III

Macedonia, a historic district of indefinite boundaries varying through the ages, shades off into Thrace on the east and Thessaly and Albania on the west. In the days of Turkish rule, as already noted, the various Balkan races had spread far and wide with no recognized group boundaries. Since classic times, therefore, Macedonia has never had a definite national status, but had supported a medley of many races attracted by its fertile valleys and long seaboard.

⁷Rumania's avowed claims to this territory were two-fold. First, she had remained neutral during the war against Turkey, in which all the states concerned had received extension of territory and she was therefore entitled to compensation. On this she had insisted from the first, of which fact Bulgaria had been fully warned. Second, it was a political necessity to humble Bulgaria, eager to make herself "the Prussia of the Balkans." As to these reasons I was told in Bulgaria that "Rumania's act was very wrong, but any other Balkan state would have done the same thing under like conditions."

⁸Kavala, the only valuable seaport Bulgaria could hope to obtain, the Kaiser insisted should be made "a present to his sister, the Queen of Greece." Venizelos, obeying orders, secured it.

By most competent authorities it is agreed that the interior and especially the mountainous parts were, before the evictions—to be discussed later on—inhabited mainly by Bulgarians. In the west were thousands of Serbians, with everywhere scattering settlements of Rumanians known as Vlachs. For the rest, the seaboard was preëmpted by Greeks. Salonica had also an extensive population of Jews, descendants of refugees from ancient persecutions in Barcelona, and still speaking the Spanish language. Turks meanwhile abounded in the towns and villages everywhere. In these regions, however as again already indicated, “race” is determined mainly by language. For example, the people about Castouria in Thessaly, though largely Bulgarian in stock, speak the Greek language and are therefore rightly counted as Greeks. For the same reason, the Albanians of Epirus are also regarded as Greeks.

Nevertheless, despite all considerations of language and race, the Bulgarians have from the first stubbornly regarded Macedonia as almost wholly Bulgarian, the Greeks, knowing the seaboard, think it mainly Greek, while the claims of Serbia to the western part of the district are scarcely less insistent. With the advent of the wars, all three nations were surprised at the variety among the Macedonian peoples, still more at their resentment at being disturbed.

The Bulgarian people expected a united Europe promptly to reverse the injustices of the Treaty of Bucharest. Especially was it believed that Great Britain, the advocate of fair play, would intercede in their behalf, even to the extent of reclaiming Adrianople. For in the first Balkan war, the populace had come to believe Bulgaria to be a child of fortune, admired of the Great Powers. But no serious protest arose in any quarter, only mild deprecations, and those from Austria and Russia.⁹

⁹That Great Britain made no show of opposition at Bucharest is now regarded as a grave diplomatic error. An expression of interest in Bulgaria's fate in 1913, might perhaps have brought her into the Entente, in spite of her German ruler. In the present conflict, the Bulgarian people had avowedly no interest save to recover the Dobruja and to liberate Macedonia.

Following the Treaty of Bucharest, the Balkans gave no farther heed to the opinions or wishes of the Powers. "Europe exists no longer" was a common saying in Sofia, to express Bulgarian disillusionment. The other states proceeded to clinch their victory. In Rumania, Turkey and Greece, general eviction was the order of the day. From the Dobruja, the Rumanians expelled all Bulgarians whose land-tenure did not accord with Rumanian law, the number of those thus affected having been estimated at upwards of 100,000. From Greek Macedonia a still larger number of Bulgarians were promptly ejected. Out of Thrace the Turks sent upwards of 300,000 Greeks and perhaps 100,000 Bulgarians, each family being given only from two hours' to four days' notice. Furthermore, they were allowed to sell nothing and to take away only what they could carry on their backs, while their farms (in general) were turned over to Albanians previously ejected by Serbia from the Novi-Bazar. This adjustment later provoked resentment among the Turkish farmers about Adrianople. They accordingly protested, charging that "the Albanians were more expert with the Mäuser than with the plow," and that "their chief accomplishment was cattle-stealing." The authorities were therefore asked to "bring back the Bulgarians who are now our friends."

In the winter and spring of 1914, 267,000 Turks left Salonica by steerage for Constantinople, while upwards of 30,000 Jews sailed for New York. When the writer went through Macedonia in May, 1914, probably more than a million people were homeless wanderers in the Balkans, living in shacks, army-tents or box-cars, often four or five families together, the Bulgarians subsisting on the four cents a day per person allowed by the government, the Greeks mainly on an equivalent in rice.

The lot of refugees from Macedonia in 1914 was wretched beyond description, many dying daily of cold and privation, all being without homes, property, schools, and everything else, including hope. An American teacher resident in Bulgaria gave the writer an interesting version of the mutual

attitude of the Bulgarian people and the Macedonian refugees who swarmed all along the Struma road from Petrich to Sofia. Said the first: "We went down to Macedonia to set you free. Why don't you stay at home instead of coming up here to take our jobs, to die in our houses, to make us all sorts of trouble. My brother died in Macedonia. O, go home!"

And the Macedonian answers: "Who asked you to come down to trample our vines, destroy our herds and bring down the Greeks upon us? I don't care if your brother did die in Macedonia. Mine is dead, too."

After certain ugly incidents, Bulgaria, being influenced more or less by outside opinion, ceased to evict either Turks or Greeks. From Serbia but few were sent out. Those who remained, however, were harshly treated by the military and forced to adopt the Serbian language and Serbian names. In fairness it must be said that this severe policy was not approved by Paschich, Serbia's wise and humane premier.

It is no part of the purpose of this article to discuss in detail theso-called atrocities of the Balkans. Nevertheless, the Report of the Carnegie Commission in 1913, a sincere andimpartial document, contains much which also came to the writer's notice in going over a part of the same ground. It is clear that soldiers of each nation participated in these crimes, and also that in many or in most cases, irregular bands or hangers-on—the Bulgarian Comatiji, the Greek Andartes and the Turkish Bashi-bazouks—were the chief culprits. In very few cases only does any high officer seem to have been implicated.

IV

The adhesion of Bulgaria to the cause of the Central Powers in the present war, was, in the writer's judgment, one of the worst of her long series of blunders. For this Tsar Ferdinand is mainly responsible. "We must go with the winner," said Ferdinand's mouthpiece, Radoslavoff. But it was too hastily assumed that the nation most lavish of promises would come out ahead.

It should be noted that Ferdinand has never had a strong following in Bulgaria. The government's slight majority in the Parliament in 1914 consisted of a dozen or so tractable Turkish delegates from Thrace. These sat at the extreme right, voting together and at the dictation of the Tsar. It is evident that bargaining with the Turk in Thrace was considered more profitable than eviction, as well as more humane. At this time (March, 1914) the writer was told that the "Left" in the Bulgarian parliament, then led by Malinoff, the present premier, was almost ripe for a republic. But the fact that Bulgaria was overburdened by dynastic neighbors served to hold this movement in check.

In the general tangle of conflicting ambitions, the relations of Bulgaria with Serbia have been peculiarly unfortunate, for the two countries must continue to be neighbors throughout history. Their inhabitants have very much in common, more in fact, than either is willing to concede. Both peoples are essentially brave, honest, self-restrained, and apart from battle-lust, humane. Their only hope for the future lies in friendship and toleration. Accusations of treachery and plans of retaliation harm both sides alike. Retaliation recognizes no limits; above all, it poisons the future.

In the restoration of the Balkans, it will be impossible to return to any previous adjustment. There is no *status quo* to fall back on, nor is any decision by plebiscite practicable. To people banished far and wide, no act can restore their lost homes, already occupied by other exiles fled from like tyrannies. The only settlement which can endure will be one raised above all military and political questions, and dictated solely by the common welfare. As has been emphasized, a permanent adjustment of the whole Balkan problem will not rest on boundaries or on questions of race or language, but on equality before the law, a customs union and some degree of federation. The most vital point, therefore, is the formation of a Balkan Confederation with free trade among members, and arbitral treaties to protect the people from injustice of all sorts. For as trade quarrels lead toward war, so customs unions lead toward conciliation, and

every move towards elimination of interstate barriers should receive the sympathy and help of all lovers of peace. Unfortunately, however, what is and what ought to be have never yet been made to coincide in the Balkans. But that fact need not darken the future. Sooner or later the United States of the Balkans is bound to arise, to the unbounded advantage of all alike.

It has been justly said that any one who makes himself acquainted with the life in any Balkan state is sure to become a partisan of the people he knows. To a large extent this is true, a fact abundantly illustrated. The individuals in each country are better than their politics, and all of them show a sturdiness of character and a capacity for education that promises much for the future. Rumania and Macedonia are unhappily still burdened with the absentee landlord. In Bulgaria and Serbia, as already indicated, there are no great landholders and no recognition of titles of nobility, a fact which lays a solid basis for democracy. All the Balkan races are bound by strong ties to America, the most enduring being those forged by Robert College and its sister institution, the Woman's College of Constantinople. The intellectual group, especially in Bulgaria, are largely graduates of Robert College, of which the University of Sofia, under the rector, Stephan Kyroff, may be regarded as a daughter institution.

In this general connection, the writer recalls a charming spring day spent on the farm of Stoyan Vatralsky, the recognized poet of Bulgaria, a Harvard man on whose library table he found magazines like the *Atlantic Monthly*, *The Nation*, and others typical of American idealism. With the acquaintances he made in Sofia and elsewhere, he could not think ill of the Bulgarians as a people, however execrable some of their war methods may be. And I can understand how others must feel equally drawn to the enthusiastic and optimistic Greeks, the clear-headed and devoted Serbians, the grave and proud Montenegrins. All of these races, the Rumanians as well, are capable of heroic acts. There is also a large hope in the unspoiled wildness of the aboriginal Albanian.

The American people as a whole will wish well to all the Balkan folk, including Bulgaria, for the time being sadly alienated from civilization. But particularly must we insist that Serbia which, with Armenia, has suffered most in these terrible days, be restored to all her just rights. At the same time, it has to be recognized that no rights at all accrue to any nation from the ill-starred Treaty of Bucharest.